

THE
Kentish ELECTION,
A NEW
COMEDY.

By L*** N*****



L O N D O N:

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THE

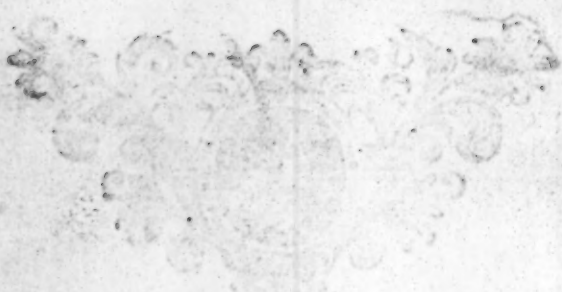
Reminiscence

NEW



COMMEMORATIVE

BY J. L. M.



Harding D95



T O

The HONOURABLE

JOHN HAMILTON, Esq;

S I R,



HE Author, tho' unknown, presents to your Protection the following SCENES; which, though numberless Errors will appear, hopes for Pardon, when he sincerely declares his Loyalty to the present Happy Establishment, his Desires to continue Trade, Peace, and Plenty in the Country, and a just Regard to our Civil Liberties, as we now enjoy; with all that Freedom a Happy People can wish for; and is, with due Respect,

S I R,

Your much Obligated,

very humble Servant,

L. N.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Lord Heartfree,
Sir John Truelove, } *Candidates.*
Spruce, a Country Beau.
Bite, a Sharper.
Homestroke,
Stickfast, } *Freeholders.*
Hot-brains,
Spiggot, Inn-keeper, and Tenant to Lord Heartfree.
Two Parsons.
Several Electors, &c.

W O M E N.

Lady Maria, Lord Heartfree's Daughter.
Mrs. Standforth, } *Country Ladies.*
Mrs. Wantcock,
Landlady.
Daughter.

SCENE *sometimes the County-Town,*
and sometimes Lord Heartfree's
House.



The Kentish Election;

A

COMEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Lord Heartfree solus, walking thoughtfully.



PHILOSOPHY brings to my View the Great Author of Nature's most wonderful Works, discovers beautifully the natural Corruptions of Man; and how, to avoid those Errors, he too often, thro' Ignorance, commits — Truly, to know themselves is a Happiness few enjoy; 'tis a Treasure the Vulgar cannot purchase — But when I consider Ambition, which, for the Country's Good, I am, as it were, oblig'd to submit to, it fills my Mind with different Idea's: For, as I hope, the whole Kingdom is well affected to the present happy establish'd Royal Family, under whom we enjoy all the Liberties of our Ancestors; so would I not have us become the Jest and Ridicule of those, who once would tremble at the Name of Britain; . . .

N. C.

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—methinks, I should be glad to see the good old Spirit of the Nation again revive, and *England*, if a War happen, as it inevitably must, become potent.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My Lord, Sir *John Truelove's* come.

Ld. H. Desire Sir *John* to walk in. I think, no Man deserves my Esteem equal to him; nor is my whole Interest too much to employ in his Service, on this Affair: Our Success I don't question, let the opposite Party be ever so strong. Sir *John*, Your Servant.

Enter Sir John Truelove.

Sir *J.* My Lord, your most obedient; have you any News?

Ld. H. Only, Sir *John*, that this Evening we are to meet, at my Tenant *Spiggot's*, some of my honest neighbouring Freeholders, who will drink heartily to our Success.

Sir *J.* I shall be glad to see 'em.

Ld. H. You'll excuse me for a Moment, Sir *John*, my Daughter's a-coming. [*Exit Ld. H.*]

Enter Lady Maria.

Sir *J.* Lady, your most obedient.

L. M. Sir *John*, Your Servant. Where is my Father gone?

Sir *J.* I wish I could inform your Ladyship, Madam; but must confess, I could wish his Lordship's Stay may be longer than I think it will, since I have the Honour of your Company.

L. M. You are very complaisant, Sir *John*.

Sir

Sir J. No, Madam; I chuse rather to be call'd, as I would always appear, plain and honest: tho' in this Age 'tis not the Way to gain a Lady's Heart.

L. M. Why not, Sir John?

Sir John. Because, Madam, most Women prefer your new-fashion Trumpery, a Beau, with a Cue-Wig, and a Wrought Snuff-Box. — They are pretty Things for a Lady to play with, ha, ha, ha.

L. M. But, Sir John, there are some to be excepted, I hope.

Sir J. Ay, Madam, I don't speak in general.

L. M. Then why so severe? methinks, you would have me understand your Mistress has prefer'd a Beau.

Sir J. No, Madam, I well know that Woman who values her Reputation, will never herd among those sort of Animals, nor admit 'em.

L. M. Granting, Sir John, there should be the greatest Number that did not; yet, for the Sake of the Jest, I think a Woman's Reputation to be out of the Question, when she only makes use of 'em to cure the Spleen — or so —

Sir J. A very fine Remedy! Well, when a Woman, for the Sake of Diversion, will suffer herself to be at the Command of those Creatures, — I will not esteem her Conduct to deserve that just Praise she may otherwise merit.

L. M. Poor Women are hardly handled —
hi, ho —

Sir J. But I ask Pardon, Madam, for my free Discourse in the Company of a Lady, whose good Name — the Men of Sense all over the Country are charm'd with. —

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L. M. Thank you, Sir *John*.

Sir *J*. I design'd only to speak Truth, Madam; and you will grant me, that there are too many of both Sexes who spend their Time only to censure those whose Virtue and Education is, perhaps, preferable to their own.

L. M. I readily acknowledge there to be numberless Faults on both Sides: but 'tis more generous to conceal, than expose 'em.——

Sir *J*. Most true, Madam.

L. M. Then, Sir *John*, you should, in Pity to the Misconduct of both, shew a compassionate Concern for their Errors; and by good Advice and Example, endeavour to prevent their further Procedure therein.

Sir *J*. I thank you, Madam, I shall have fine Work to reform the World —— ha, ha, ha.

L. M. You seem to chuse it, Sir *John*.

Enter Lord Heartfree.

Ld. H. What is't you chuse, Sir *John*?

Sir *J*. My Lady's going to put me in a fine Post —— I am to preach Morality, and reform the World.

Ld. H. Ha, ha, ha, my Dear, can you find no better Employ for Sir *John*?

L. M. Your Lordship cannot disapprove of any thing for the Publick Good —— And we want a Reformation in the Country as much as possible.

Ld. H. Do you hear, Sir *John*? You'll have exceeding pretty Employ.

Sir *J*. I think so, my Lord.

Ld.

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Ld. H. Well, but for the present, we must think of going to *Spiggot's*; our Neighbours will be there, and expect us. My Dear, I will not stay late. Adieu. Come, Sir *John*.

Sir J. I attend your Lordship. Lady, Your most obedient.

L. M. Sir *John*, Your Servant.

[*Exeunt Ld. Heartf. and Sir J. Truel.*

I can't imagine what is the Matter with me; whenever I see that Sir *John Truelove*, my Heart flutters so unaccountably, that I can't contain myself, Methinks, I would not play the Fool, and love any Man, unless I were sure of a Return first: but how 'twill be in this Affair I can't say; for he seems so naturally free from the two common Vices among Men of Fortune, that I cannot help thinking his Heart would be preferable to any—the most polite Courtier in the Land. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *a Market in the Town.*

Enter Bite.

Bite. I wish I could take this Country Fop in for his Cole: He should be flush on't, by his Dress and Discourse. D—n it, I'll push; 'tis but a little Time lost —

Enter Spruce.

Well met, Sir, I thought I had lost you—as we were walking just now, you seem'd much to commend your new Candidates—but pray, Sir, have you no 'Ladies in Town that merit your Com-

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Commendations? methinks, a popular Place, as this is, without 'em seems desolate.

Sp. Ladies! Sir; the finest in the Creation; pox me; witty, pretty, fine Cloaths, much Money, and good Manners.

Bite. Good News, by *Jupiter*! Well, one may spend one's Time in some tolerable Manner then. Pray have you any Publick Entertainments?

Sp. Oh Sir! To-night we have an Assembly; to which, Sir, if it be agreeable, I'll introduce you: Good Company in our Town is scarce, and the Ladies will be pleas'd to see a Gentleman of your Appearance there.

Bite. Sir, Your Favours are so acceptable — I shall never be able to return the Obligation —

Sp. You *Londoners* are so very full of Compliments to us unpolite Country-Fellows, that we know not how to talk with you —

Bite. Oh, Sir; upon my Soul!

Sp. On my Life, Sir, you are.

Bite. No, Sir; you are so complaisant — but, to pass away our Time as agreeably as possible, suppose we go to the Coffee-house half an Hour.

Sp. With all my Heart, Sir; tho' I had promis'd to drink Tea with Mrs. *Wantcock*.

Bite. Pray Sir, don't disappoint the Lady on my Account.

Sp. Oh Sir, 'tis no Matter: I presume I shall be excus'd, if I do break my Word for once.

Bite. You lay a double Obligation upon me — Do you ever use Back-Gammon, Sir?

Sp. A very pretty Diversion; yes, Sir, commonly.

Bite.

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Bite. One can't pass one's Time more agreeably, I think —

Bite. Yours is the most polite Town I ever saw; and the Buildings more commodious than common: Well, Sir, I should prefer this Place even to *London* —

Sp. Oh, Sir, you are pleas'd to compliment.

Bite. Not at all, Sir: but I'll wait on you to the Coffee-house.

Sp. Sir, I'll shew you the Way, if you please.
[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E III. *Spiggot's House.*

Enter Spiggot.

Spig. Hoa, Wife! Pox on thee; my Lord will be here with the Company before thou hast got the Room ready.

Wife within.] Coming, Sot.

Enter Wife.

Spig. Ay, rot thee, come along; I wish the De'l would purge thee of thy ill Humours —

Wife. And thee of thy Drunkenness — Beast.

Spig. — Is the Room ready, and the Victuals cooking? some of the Company's just coming.

Wife. What's that to you, Careless—he—Sot?

Sp. Don't abuse me; don't, I say.

Within.] Landlord — Landlord.

Spig. Coming, Sir. } *Both run.*

Wife. Coming, Sir. }

S C E N E

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SCENE *changes to a large Country-Hall, with Stags-Horns, &c.*

*Enter Spiggot bowing to the Company who enter ;
Two Parsons, Home-stroke, Hot-brains, Stick-
fast, and other Electors, who sit down.*

1 Par. Come, Landlord, fill us a Tiff of Punch.

Spig. Yes, Sir.

Stick. And let every Man fill a Bumper to the Healths of Lord Heartfree and Sir John True-love.

Home. [*To the Parsons.*] That Fellow might have drunk to the Confoundation of the Excise, if he had one Jot of Manners.

2 Par. Right, Neighbour ; but we'll have that privately now : 'twill bear twice ——

Home. With all my Guts. You're good Blood, Doctor.

Stick. You might have pledg'd my Health first, Gentleman.

1 Par. We intend to pledge yours, and drink down the Excise too.

Stick. Honestly spoken.

2 Par. I hear a Coach without. I fancy my Lord's come.

Hot. My Lord's a very honest Man, indeed. *Spiggot* will bring Word.

Enter Spiggot running.

Spig. Gentlemen, my Lord and Sir John are at the Door a-coming in.

Enter

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Enter Lord Heartfree and Sir John Truelove.

*[All pay their Respects, then afterwards
reseat themselves.]*

L. H. Gentlemen, I am glad to see you all —
Good Health to my Friends. *[Drinks.]*

Sir J. Prosperity to Trade. *[Drinks.]*

All drink.] Health and Success to Lord Heart-
free and Sir John Truelove.

L. H. You are met, Gentlemen, to consult proper Measures for electing Sir John and Myself your Representatives in the ensuing Parliament; the Honour of which important Trust, we, if it be our Lot to be chose, will endeavour to discharge as faithfully as possible, always remembering a free People's Liberties are valuable beyond any other Consideration whatever.

I Par. My Lord, we are all satisfy'd in your Lordship's good Conduct, and Sir John's; and we think, cannot repose our Country's Safety to any so well deserving —

Hotbrains to Stickfast apart.

Hot. With all my Heart, they may have it: but don't let us venture too far on any Man's Honesty.

Stick. No; you are right.

Home. to 'em. Ay, ay, Neighbours; Uds Bud! don't let us run Hand over Head — a Thousand Pounds a Year may make both vote for the Excise.

Hot. And that great Statesman at *Westminster* will bedawb 'em I warrant — and then where are we —

Stick. Only Excis'd.

Hot. Only Excis'd! Oh then I find you like it.

Stick.

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Stick. No, Booby; but mayn't one speak?
What a Prov —

Home. Come, Gentlemen, we shall be particular to leave the Company. — *softly.* We'll meet by ourselves, and consider of this —

Sir J. Come, Gentlemen, be merry; methinks, this looks like a silent Meeting. Tell a Story, Doctor — My Lord, you seem thoughtful.

L. H. I was thinking, *Sir John*, that, as most Part of *Europe* is now in Arms, it becomes all, who wish well to their Country, to hope we shall make such wise Provision, in case we are plunged into the like Difficulties, as to give our Enemies no Advantage over us.

Sir J. We have no Business at the Helm, my Lord: but I hope *England* will be as much fear'd as formerly she was, which way soever she may think proper to be —

L. H. I hope we shall; but we cannot be insensible what a vast Disturbance busy Malice has created in the Minds of most, thro' the ill Conduct of our Superiors; nor how to heal those Wounds their late headlong Thoughtlessness brought upon us, we cannot tell: I pray Heaven some new Way may be found to reconcile the Vulgar; tho' it must be by gentle Usage.

Sir J. No Doubt, my Lord, but gentle Usage will prevail more than any thing with the common People —

Hot. For my Part, give me a good Word, and I'll do any thing.

L. H. Ay, Neighbour, Good-nature ought always to be priz'd: you know, Gentlemen, 'tis our Duty to maintain the Grandeur of the Crown, and to pride ourselves in the Splendor of the Court;

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Court; for from that Fountain springs the greatest Blessings a free-born People can inherit: Nay, how inexcusable are we to grudge that which must save us from inevitable Ruin: My good Friends, you may depend on't we never shall have a General Excise, while a good and honest Spirit prompts us chearfully to contribute to our Country's Safety.

Home. Nay, then I am easy, if we are not Excis'd.

Sir J. Depend on't, my Friend, you never will, unless Faction bring it on you.

Home. Nay, I'll cause no Difference.

Stick. Nor I.

All. We love Peace and Liberty.

L. H. And very fitting 'tis that all *Englishmen* should enjoy both: nay, I'll be bold to say they will; for this Age, at least, if they don't pull down Slavery on their own Heads —

1 Par. That, I hope, my Lord, we shall not do.

2 Par. My Lord, if the People do that, 'tis they must suffer.

L. H. 'Tis very true, Sir; then pray how careful ought we to be in Affairs of such a Consequence.

Sir J. I can't think, my Lord, but as 'tis the People's Interest to preserve their Liberties, they will, from a Sense of that, always act accordingly.

L. H. That I believe: but, *Sir John*, it now grows late, and my Health will not permit me to stay; therefore, I hope, my Friends will excuse me.

Sir J. I'll attend your Lordship.

L. H.

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L. H. Gentlemen, in this rest satisfy'd, that we will ever, as far as in us lyes, be serviceable to our Country.

All. We believe it, and wish you both Success.

L. H. Gentlemen, sit you merry.
Is the Coach there?

[Exit.

Sir J. Many Thanks for your Company. Good Night. [At parting, all the Company rise, and pay their Respects.

[Exit after L. H.

The Company repeat themselves.

I Par. 'Twill not be disagreeable now, Gentlemen, to be merry half an Hour, I hope.

Hot. No, Doctor; we should have a Song —
Neighbour Stickfast, come, your Song —

Stick. Ay — but —

Home. No buts, Man. Come, sing.

Stick. Ha! hem!

[sings.

GOOD Morrow, old Sly;
Now wherefore so shy?
Dost thou shun a kind loving Brother?
If the Truth you would know,
The Thing it was so,
Which caus'd this damnable Pother.

I chanc'd, by the Way,
On a fine Sunny-Day:
But Oh! 'twas a devilish Blunder,
To slip into Bed
With a pretty young Maid,
And could not get her Legs asunder.
I chanc'd, &c.

*You may guess how I vex'd
My self and perplex'd,
To think I was made such a Fool on;
Tho' kiss'd, and was kind,
And still in a Mind
To take a Collation to cool one.*

*I said, O my Dear,
Did you never hear,
What I promise to do without Blunder:
But still 'twas the same,
For, whenever I came
To the Joke, I could not get her Legs asunder.
I said, &c.*

*But in the Close of the Whole,
'Tis true, by my Soul,
The Matter came oddly to bear;
For, as she lay sleeping,
I fell a creeping,
Most Ladies soon will guess where;*

*Since which happy Time,
She has alter'd her Chime,
And often makes it a Wonder,
That no Woman can be
So happy as she,
When her Legs are five Foot asunder.*

1 Par. Very merry, upon my Soul.
Stick. Ay, Gentlemen, I was a merry Blade;
but, God help me, 'tis a-moſt over; — Age,
Neighbour, Age.

2 Par. Innocent Mirth is commendable.

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Stick. Does the Scripture forbid it, Doctor?

1 *Par.* No, not when 'tis us'd with Moderation.

Hot. I'm glad of that.

Home. And so turn Beast. Don't encourage Drunkeness, Doctor —

2 *Par.* Drunkeness is a damnable Sin.

Stick. Then, what must become of *Spiggot*?

1 *Par.* If Repentance don't save him, he is miserable indeed.

Hot. Talk of the Devil, and he appears; as the Saying is.

Enter Spiggot drunk.

Spig. Coming -- coming -- coming, Sir. No Excise. Coming — Excise is my Cry, by *Vulcan* — Dear Doctor, upon my Soul, I hope, *Stick*, You and I, shall live to see ev'ry Exciseman in this Kingdom so drunk he can't gauge: By G--d, 'twould be a pretty—hickup—pretty Sight: Pray, Gentlemen, can't you sing? I would, but fear that damn'd Scold, my Wife, should be rather too free of her Airs — hickup — So, Gentlemen, by your Leaves, I'll drink once to her Confoundation.

[As he reels to the Table, he falls over it, and breaks the Glasses, &c.]

1 *Par.* You Beast. Oh, this terrible Sin of Drunkeness! I'll go home to avoid it. *[Ex. reeling.]*

2 *Par.* What's my Brother gone? Nay, then, good-night — this Fellow's so drunk — I'll go home to pray — hickup — *[Exit.]*

Hot. The Punch is strong, Neighbour.

Home. Ay, let's draw off, 'tis Time.

Stick. Well, I wish 'em well --- hickup --- So let's go --- 'tis very late, by the Moon.

[All rise, and go off reeling. All this Time

Spiggot lies gasping by the Table. Enter

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Enter his Wife and Daughter.

W. O, here's the Sot your Father.

D. Let's thump him, Mother ; he's drunk.

W. Run, Huffy, and fetch the Cudgels.

[Exit Running.]

Now shall I be revenged. Come, *Nan*.

Enter Daughter.

— Here, Mother, let me have the biggest.

W. Come, strike. --- Oh you Dog. *[both beat him.]*

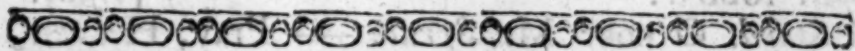
Sp. Oh, my dear Wife.

W. No Dears, now — Your Coat han't been dusted this good while, Rascal.

[After a Struggle he gets up, gets their Cudgels, drives both away.]

Sp. Damn'd Jades. Well, now, if the Whores were here, I'd maul 'em. I'm beaten to Death. Well, I am sober again. — God help poor *Spiggot*, for his Wife's a Devil. I wish she was in Heaven, or elsewhere, for me — Pray Heaven there may be an Excise upon Women, that I may pawn her to the Collector ; and if I redeem her again, may I never drink in Peace.

There's nothing plagues poor *Spiggot's* Life,
So much as that damn'd Scold, his Wife.



ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Mrs. Standforth and Wantcock.

Stand. **I** Tell you, Madam, that though I have no Opinion of the Fellow, I won't hear him abus'd. —

Want. Madam, I will not abuse him — but, I hope, you have no Pretensions to him.

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Stand. What, if I have — am I to confess to you, Madam?

Want. Why, Madam, if you have ; I would inform you, that I am your Rival.

Stand. Ha, ha, ha, a pretty Story. Why, Madam, don't you know that I have a Hundred Pounds more than you?

Want. And don't you know, Madam, that I am eight Years younger than you?

Stand. Unmannerly Slut! [*Aside.*] Indeed, Age is nothing in our Case: but you must submit to your Betters.

Want. Submit to my Betters? ha, ha, ha.

Stand. Ay, to your Betters; if you understand that Word?

Want. Yes; but never to you, while my Name is *Wantcock*.

Stand. You'll find you must.

Want. Must — I won't, Madam.

Enter Spruce stripp'd, and dirty; who, seeing the Lady, endeavours to conceal himself, but is seen.

Want. Heaven defend me! that is not *Spruce*, sure, without Cloaths. Has the poor Creature been robb'd? — [*Aside.*

Stand. O poor Mr. *Spruce* — Pray, Heaven she may not see him. I'll after him, to know the Cause of his Misfortune. [*Exit.*

Want. What's the idle Strumpet slid after him? I'll watch 'em. [*Exit after 'em.*

Re-enter Spruce.

Now, to conceal myself from being expos'd to my two Mistresses at once, I will try the Wisdom of

of a Philosopher. D—n that *Bite*, a Villain; I shall never be able to recover my Cloaths again. Well, if it does not go about that I was robb'd, I am ruin'd for ever — Here they are. Now, *Spruce*, thy Glory's at an End — Thou must be thrown off for a Gamester.

Enter Standforth and Wantcock.

Stand. So, Mr. *Spruce*, I was willing to know if 'twas you, for my own Satisfaction —

Want. Poor Mr. *Spruce* —

Sp. You are impertinent, Madam.

Stand. Pray Sir, how came you by this Misfortune?

Want. Answer me first. Mr. *Spruce*, have you been robb'd?

Stand. Dear Madam, give me Leave to ask the Gentleman how he came in this Condition?

Want. I sha'n't submit, Madam.

Sp. Dear Ladies, I was robb'd, and almost murther'd; you shall know the Particulars, as soon as I am a little recover'd — so pray excuse me, for the present, to get some Cloaths — I can't go to the Assemblies now. [*Aside.*

Was there ever such a Dog? [*As he goes out.*

Want. Heigh! poor Gentleman!

Stand. He don't want your Pity, Madam — I'll try to make her mad. [*Aside.*

Want. We ought both to pity his Misfortunes.

Stand. Ay, but who knows, he may have lost his Cloaths a Gaming, or —

Want. I ha'n't Patience, Madam; you scandalous Woman. —

Stand.

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St. You know, Madam, 'tis very common for Gentlemen to whore away their Estates. —

Want. And so you would infer that Mr. *Spruce* has whor'd away his Cloaths.

St. I don't say so, Madam.

Want. But you believe so, Madam.

St. I will believe what I please, Madam.

Want. I will have Mr. *Spruce* clear himself, Madam.

St. You need not trouble your Head about Mr. *Spruce*; for he don't care a Fig for you: ha, ha, ha!

Want. He never told you so, Mistress; ha, ha, ha! impudent Puffs, Adieu. [Exit.

St. Idle, unmannerly Slut! what, gone after him! she may do me a Diskindness with her Tongue — I must not leave her so. [Exit.

S C E N E *changes.*

Enter Bite.

Bite. Tho' the Fellow had no Money, his Cloaths will sell — I could not have thought this Place had been so like *London*. A lac'd Coat without Money has been no Rarity there these fifty Years, but here 'tis the Devil — This Fellow's a little like me, he lives upon the Publick; only he seems rather to be the Lady's Tool, ha, ha, ha. I fancy I have shorne their Lap-dog now; ha! Rot me, if he is n't here in another Suit. Well, I must be civil. — Sir, Your Servant.

Enter Spruce dress'd.

Sp. Yes, Sir,

Bite.

Bite. You seem melancholy, Sir; may I know the Cause?

Sp. You are the Cause.

Bite. My good Fortune just now, I hope, don't give you any Uneasiness, Sir; and I am sure, I am not your Rival any-where.

Sp. But you have sharp'd me out of my Cloaths.

Bite. Sir, I scorn the Name: And, as I play'd five Guineas against them, that you may see I'll be honourable; for that you may have 'em again — when you please.

Sp. Sir, I'll have 'em for less Money; therefore, have sent for a Warrant.

Bite. Ha, ha, ha, a Warrant. No Threats, pray, Sir; you shall be expos'd, if you please, every-where else, as well as before the Mayor.

Sp. I can never be expos'd in detecting of a Sharper.

Bite. 'Tis past you to prove me such a Man.

Sp. Sir, you're an errant Cheat.

Bite. A losing Gamester has Leave to speak.

Sp. You Villain, give me my Cloaths; or —

Bite. I can't afford it now.

Sp. By Gad — Sir; you vile hard-hearted Dog — you are, Sir, a Villain — a —

Bite. Out of Charity to a Madman, I'll send you a Doctor, before the Parish commit you to Bedlam. [Exit,

Sp. What shall I do? Was there ever such an unfortunate Fellow: my Father, poor Man, always said I should come to an ill End; and now I begin to think so myself. I wish he was alive, I'd reform, and accept of the Exciseman's Place — but now I have neither Money, or Friends;
and

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and what to do I know not — A Curse on all
Gamesters and Gaming for ever — [*Exit.*]

IS CENE II. *Lady Maria's Apartment.*

Lady Maria Reading.

*And tho' in secret I your Flame approv'd,
I sigh'd, and griev'd, but durst not own I lov'd;
Tho' now, O Strephon, be so kind to guess
What Shame will not allow me to confess.*

Poor Wench! desperately in Love! Heaven
be prais'd, that's not my Case — tho' no Wo-
man, at my Years, can foresee how she may be
intangled in that Snare — 'Tis good not to be
too secure — for Fear — What 'tis my Father
wants with me I can't conceive, that he should so
particularly desire me to be in the Way at this
Time — I think, he has no Secret to commu-
nicate that I don't know already — yet, I am
sure, 'tis something of Moment, which I am im-
patient to know — Oh, I hear he's coming.

Enter Lord Heartfree.

L. H. How does my dear Girl? Are you to
receive Visitors, that you are dress'd so gay?

L. M. None but your Lordship, you promis'd
to be here at this Time.

L. H. Then, I am come, according to my
Word, my Dear.

L. M. Your Lordship is always so.

L. H. No Compliments, Child, to an old
Man.

L. M.

L. M. Truth, my Lord, should not be term'd a Compliment.

L. H. My Dear, sit you down—— I am come to question you about an Affair that most nearly concerns your future Felicity; therefore, before you answer me directly, consider well, and speak freely to a Father, that consults, and would prefer his Child's Happiness to any other Consideration.

L. M. In as much as I am capable, my Lord, I will obey your Commands.

L. H. My Dear, nothing, without your own Approbation, do I ask; and therefore, desire you will duly consider, and tell me, whether you can think of marrying with Pleasure——

L. M. Allowing me the common Frailties; or, to speak more proper, the common Inclinations of my Sex—— and, would your Lordship chuse for me a Man suitable in his Person, Fortune, and Years—— I could.

L. H. Tho' 'tis hard to find so compleat a Man, as I could wish to recommend my Child for a Husband; yet the Person, that I would propose, must, in all you have nam'd, be allow'd to come up to, if not exceed——

L. M. But, may I ask your Lordship, to whom Providence has been so indulgent—— as so much to deserve your Commendation?

L. H. Yes, my Dear; if you will first give me your sentiments on that part of the good Character, which you think belongs to Sir *John True-love*.

L. M. My Lord, I must confess, to all Appearance, Sir *John's* a Man qualified for every state of Life; and, as far as I have ever heard,
both

both his publick and private Characters are without soil——but, if your Lordship mention him as a Lover, 'tis impossible I can give you my sentiments thereon.

L. H. Is his Person agreeable?

L. M. Without Fault, my Lord.

L. H. You cannot object against his Estate?

L. M. No, my Lord.

L. H. Could you, out of many, indifferently admit of his Address, equal to any other Gentleman?

L. M. If your Lordship approve of him.

L. H. But, suppose you were to chuse for your self, and knew nothing of his Character, how would it be?

L. M. That I cannot say; but this your Lordship may depend upon, that no Man shall ever possess my Esteem, without your Knowledge.

L. H. That, my dear Girl, I believe; and, since, on this Occasion, I have question'd you about Sir *John Truelove*, who, I think to be as deserving a Man as any I ever knew—I will inform you, that, shortly, I have reason to believe, he will make honourable Offers of his Love; which, I hope, you will accept of, only to their true Value——for, both his good and bad Qualifications will most easily be perceiv'd, by freely conversing with him.

L. M. I will, if he should make any Offers of that Kind; observe, as nicely as possible, your Lordship's Commands.

L. H. 'Tis true; I believe, Sir *John Truelove* to be as free from the Follies and Vices, which taint most Men of Fortune, as possible: yet, I
say,

say, there may be some Imperfection harbour'd in him, that may create a Discontent, when there is no Remedy; therefore, I pray you, as you know how to avoid the Knave, and encourage the Man of Honour, to strictly observe him; and discover, if you can, all his Faculties, both good and bad—I would not, over-again, put you in mind of this; but that I, by much, prefer your Happiness.

L. M. My Lord, I am very sensible of your paternal Care; therefore, in this, I will not act one Thing without your Knowledge —

L. H. My Dear, I believe you will not.

L. M. But submit, as I am (in Duty) bound to your Lordship's better Judgment.

L. H. I know thou wast always good and dutiful; but, for the present, I have done: Sir *John* will be here to Dinner; therefore, step, and order it; I'll follow presently —

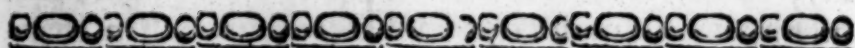
L. M. I will, my Lord. [Exit L. M.]

Lord Heartfree solus.

'Twill compleat my Happiness, to see my Child so well dispos'd of — true Content is the most valuable Thing on Earth — 'Tis impossible for us to know a Happiness so great, or to enjoy any thing comparable to it: neither is the Purchase beyond our Reach; for, a right Consideration of Things always brings it — but where, thro' Strife and Ill-nature, we make our Lives unhappy, Providence most justly punishes us for our Follies.

Heaven, to me, two States of Bliss assign'd;
And that, below, is sweetest Peace of Mind.

ACT



ACT III. SCENE I.

Lord Heartfree, Sir John Truelove, and Lady Maria, (as having just din'd) sitting at Table.

L. H. Sir *John*, To our good Success. [*Drinks.*

Sir J. With all my Heart.

Madam, To our good Success. [*Drinks to L. M.*

L. M. Thank you, Sir *John*.

L. H. I'm thinking, Sir *John*, we shall meet with a stronger Opposition than we expected —

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My Lord, there are several Men without, say they have Business of Importance, and want to speak with your Lordship.

L. H. I'll come.

[*Exit Serv.*

You'll excuse me, good Folks.

[*Exit.*

Sir J. Thanks to my Stars for this Opportunity.

[*Aside.*

L. M. What is't you pause on, Sir *John* — not who shall be your next Wife —

Sir J. Upon my Word, Lady, you have guess'd right; for, I was just considering what a fortunate Opportunity I had to tell you, Madam, how sincerely I am devoted to your Service.

L. M. Thank you, Sir.

Sir J. And that, by a long and well-grounded Knowledge of your Merits, I must own, that my greatest Esteem is poor, when offer'd to your Acceptance.

L. M. My Merits are very small, Sir *John*.

Sir

Sir J. Small, as you please to term them, Madam, they shine so bright, as to cause Admiration in all.

L. M. O Sir *John*, pray talk not at this Rate—Gentlemen now are so polite, that they can't meet a Woman without this kind of Discourse.

Sir J. I allow, Madam, that Men are too often guilty of deceiving the Fair with Hopes of gratifying their Passions, in a Way not proper to mention: but, still you will make some Allowance, when there is a Likelyhood of not being falsely dealt with.

L. M. I would, Sir *John*.

Sir J. Why then, could Your Ladyship not credit me, were I to declare I lov'd you alone?

L. M. Because 'tis possible you might deceive me.

Sir J. But, do you really entertain that Opinion of me?

L. M. You know, Sir *John*, we are all frail by Nature.

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha; and some by Art.

L. M. Well, Sir; you shall have it your own Way.

Sir J. Why then, Madam, I'll take the Liberty to be serious, and declare, that I have long lov'd you, preferable to any Woman upon Earth; and have, I thank Heaven, now found this Opportunity to assure your Ladyship of it; and vow, that no Consideration shall ever tempt me to falsify this Promise, let the Event be as it will.

L. M. Every-body, 'tis confess'd, has a great Esteem for the Honour and Veracity of Sir *John Truelove*: yet, in an Affair wherein a Woman's Reputation is so nearly concern'd, 'tis pardonable to doubt.

Sir

Sir J. I grant it, Madam, when a Lady is unacquainted with the Character of her Lover : but, if you consider the Nature of this Thing, and how, by intimate Friendship with my Lord, I must hope for Success in our present Undertaking, 'twill not admit of Doubt.

L. M. I have no Reason to think you would not preserve a just Friendship with my Father, Sir *John* — but still, tho' you seem serious, I can hardly believe you can be so unpolite, as to have but one Mistress.

Sir J. 'Tis not the Unpoliteness, or Unfashionableness of a Thing, that should either add to, or diminish from the real Value of it — I am sure Your Ladyship cannot justly condemn me for preferring a Life that appears most agreeable, as in itself this must —

L. M. No, Sir *John* ; 'twould be very wrong to discourage a Virtuous Disposition.

Sir J. Besides, Madam ; though I own, you have great Reason to distrust my Fidelity, when every Day presents us with some new unheard of Scene of Villany, even from those we term Honest Men — yet, among all the fashionable Vices of the Times, I firmly challenge from the World another Character — Indeed, to applaud one's self is wrong ; but, when 'tis necessary Truth should appear for our Justification, the Vanity is excusable.

L. M. Upon my Word, Sir *John*, you would bring me to believe you sincere in your Assertions.

Sir J. Upon my Soul, I am sincere, Madam.

L. M. You are ?

Sir J. And shall count myself the happiest of Men, if I may hope my Service will be acceptable.

L. M.

The KENTISH ELECTION. 31

L. M. You are very complaisant, Sir *John*; I know not how to talk with you.

Sir *J.* Will you give me Leave to hope?

[*Takes her by the Hand.*

L. M. Hope, Sir?

[*Drawing back.*

Sir *J.* Yes, Madam.

L. M. What for?

Sir *J.* Your kind Acceptance of my imperfect, but best Desires, to become your faithful Servant.

L. M. Sir *John*, this is an Affair, that I can't well answer for any Way; neither am I at my own Disposal: for, in Obedience to my Father's Will, if I ever marry, 'twill be only to that Man who merits his Approbation.

Sir *J.* You are the most perfect Pattern of Goodness I ever saw. Well, Madam, I will solicit for your Father's Consent; which I doubt not of, having always strove to merit his Favour, which I think preferable to any he has plentifully bestow'd: but this will be an Instance worth all.

L. M. I must acknowledge your Respect to have been great, Sir *John*, ever for our Family — Here's my Father.

Ent. Lord Heartfree,

L. H. News from Sir *Harry Goodman*, and Justice *Bencher* — that our Interest daily increases in their Neighbourhood, and they desire we will not trouble ourselves with that Part of the Country; for they will severally bring their Men, in Time, to Poll, if needful —

Sir *J.* I think, my Lord, 'twas Folly in the Gentlemen to pretend to oppose you.

L. M. I wish this Election was over.

Sir *J.* In few Days, Madam, you'll have your Wish.

L. H.

32 *The KENTISH ELECTION.*

L. H. My poor Girl will be much fatigued.

Sir J. Being so near the Place, my Lord, you'll be full of Company.

L. H. Ay, *Sir John*. Come, shall we spend half an Hour in the Garden, this delightful Evening?

L. M. Pray, my Lord, shew us the Way; if it be agreeable to *Sir John*.

Sir J. Nothing can be disagreeable, that you propose, Madam.

L. M. Upon my Word, Sir.

Sir J. Upon my Word, Lady; if you compliment, I must not say another Word.

L. H. Come, I think, ye both compliment.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*]

SCENE changes to Spiggot's.

Enter Stickfast.

Stick. Ho! *Spiggot*.

Spig. [*Within.*] Coming, Sir.

Enter Spiggot.

Stick. Any Company come?

Spig. No, Sir; but they'll be here presently.

Stick. Who!

Spig. Why, the Parsons, Maister *Hotbrains* and *Homestroke*, and several Freeholders, I can't tell who all: but there's a Sirloin of Beef at the Fire for 'em.

Stick. Do you know their Business to-night?

Spig. No.

Spig. [*Within.*] Coming, Sir. O here's all the Company—

Enter

The KENTISH ELECTION. 33

*Enter two Parsons, Home-stroke, Hot-brains, &c.
Seat themselves.*

1 Par. Well, now to our Business. What is't, Neighbours, you want to consult?

Home. Why, Sir, we are willing to consider, whether 'twas safe to trust our Gentlemen without their Promise in Writing.

2 Par. How do you think to get that?

Hot. By drawing up Articles, which they will sign.

Stick. Upon my Word, Gentlemen, 'tis proper we should have some Security: for that Excise — Sir, is a sad Thing.

1 Par. Ay, but I can't think they will vote that Way.

2 Par. No, Friends, you may rest assur'd that they don't endeavour to Excise us.

Home. I don't believe they will; but am afraid of the great Statesman: he never fails to bring Men over to his Side.

Hot. Ay, ay, the Golden Bait.

Stick. Is very tempting.

1 Par. But how can we prevent its being in the Way?

Home. I know not, indeed; but desir'd you to come here to contrive something to prevent it. Ah — *England!* —

Hot. 'Sbud, let's make 'em sign Articles.

2 Par. What Articles?

Hot. Why first, as we are at present over-tax'd and excis'd, they shall never vote for any new Duty, Peace or War.

1 Par. There must be more Taxes, if there is a War.

34 *The KENTISH ELECTION.*

Home. Why, ha'n't the Government Money enough?

Stick. I'm sure the Country has none to spare; for what with the King, the Parson, and the Poor, a Man can't get Bread.

2 Par. I hope you don't grudge the Parson.

Hot. If he does, Sir, the Amends is in his own Hands.

1 Par. Well, what farther would you desire?

Home. That the People may be eas'd of some of the present Taxes,

Stick. And the great Men at *Westminster* draw their Purse-strings.

Hot. I swear, if I thought 'twas no Sin, I'd turn Smugler, rather than pay for smoking.

1 Par. A pretty Job indeed! So you could in Conscience cheat the King?

Hot. Sir, I love King *George*, but I hate the Excisemen.

2 Par. Ay, but you'll never be free from 'em.

Stick. No, God help us; — 'tis hard.

1 Par. Why look ye, Gentlemen, I own the Case is very hard; but how to mend it, is the Question. If we but mention to my Lord that we suspect his Honour; would be better satisfy'd too, if he would bind himself to do as we'd have him: Depend on't we should find him angry at the Proposal, and perhaps directly side with the Court Party; and then how should we be off? for he has great Interest; therefore we had better be satisfy'd as we are, and with good Words win him to our Side.

2 Par. Ay, Neighbours, that's the surest Way to prevail.

Hot. Why — I think 'tis.

Home.

The KENTISH ELECTION. 35

Home. Ay, as you say, he may side with the Court Party if we anger him, indeed.

Stick. Ay, 'tis a broken Stick.

Hot. What?

Stick. Honour.

2 Par. Don't fear; Sir *John* and my Lord are both honest Men, and will serve their Country.

Home. I believe it.

1 Par. Why then do ye doubt?

Hot. Because we do'nt know it.

Stick. Well, I see nothing's to be done, so let's go to Supper. Here, *Spiggot*.

Enter Spiggot.

1 Par. Is Supper ready, Landlord?

Spig. Yes, Sir, yes. I laid the Cloth in another Room, because I thought you had Business here. Sir, every thing is ready; please to walk in.

[*Spiggot takes a Candle to light 'em. Exit first Parson and Stickfast.*]

Home. Come, Gentlemen, to Supper. — I don't like this; 'Tis doubtful, Doctor, whether we may smoke or not. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

S C E N E *changes.*

Enter Mrs. Wantcock.

Wan. What a State am I in! Abus'd by him I love; persecuted to Death by that unmannerly Woman. Sure the Plague of being an old Maid is the most insupportable Torment in Life. O that I could once more see the Monster — Oh!

36. *The KENTISH ELECTION.*

Enter Spruce.

Sp. O. my dear Mrs. *Wantcock*. [*Goes to salute her.*

Want. Stand off, Villain.

Sp. Lord ! what's the Matter, Madam ?

Want. Matter, ungrateful Monster ! be gone to Mrs. *Standforth*.

Sp. Upon my Soul, dear Lady, you wrong me.

Want. You have wrong'd me much worse.

Sp. Tell me in what, wherein I have wrong'd you.

Want. Don't your Guilt appear ? Where have you spent your Time ever since *Monday* last, but with Mrs. *Standforth* ? She is now become the Object of your Wishes — Oh you vile Fellow ! Oh —

Sp. Dear Madam, give me leave to clear myself.

Want. You can't clear yourself.

Sp. Upon my Life, Madam, then I have not seen her since I had the Misfortune to be robb'd ; nor have I been out of Doors.

Want. Robb'd Sir !

Sp. Ay, upon my Soul, stripp'd and robb'd of all I had.

Want. When, Sir ?

Sp. Last *Monday*.

Want. Poor Gentleman ! Lord, I remember you was without Clothes.

Sp. Ay, that was the Time ; and it goes to my very Soul to think you should reflect upon me so ; for you know my Heart is yours.

Want. Then, Mr. *Spruce*, you might have sent to me.

Sp. Ay, Madam, but one forgets every thing in such a Misfortune.

Want.

Want. But have you not seen Mrs. *Standforth* since ?

Sp. No, Madam.

Want. Upon your honest Word ?

Sp. Upon my Life, I never heard of any such thing before.

Want. Not from me ; but you can't deny you Court her.

Sp. I'm sure, if I were to own it, I should be guilty of the greatest Falshood imaginable.

Want. And you say there's nothing in't.

Sp. Nothing, upon my Life.

Want. You know the Way to my Heart too well.

Sp. If I have offended, 'tis without any Intent, but ask Pardon.

Want. If I thought so —

Sp. 'Tis very true.

Want. Well then, since you force me. But if ever I know you guilty —

Sp. Upon my Soul you shall never have Reason to complain.

Wan. We shall see.

Sp. Then name the Time, that :

Wan. What ?

Sp. Will make me happy.

Wan. How happy ?

Sp. In the Possession of your dear self.

Wan. Why do you press me so ?

Sp. Because I'm impatient.

Wan. For what ?

Sp. To be in your Arms.

Wan. Oh Sir, how you talk !

Sp. Nothing but my real Sentiments ; therefore, Madam, give me this Opportunity to justify myself.

Want.

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Wan. Well, Sir, you shall have it your own way.

Sp. Then, will you condescend to make To-morrow our Wedding-Day.

Wan. Not so soon — I think, — as you please. But come this Afternoon and drink Tea.

Sp. I'll not fail, Madam.

Wan. Don't.

Sp. And then we'll consult.

Wan. We will. Adieu, I shall expect you.

[*Exit Wantcock.*

Sp. Solus. Well done, *Spruce*, thou hast acted thy Part well. Now will I have two Strings to my Bow; and, if I can get Mrs. *Standforth*, *Wantcock* may dye an Old Maid. I reckon she will be out—Lucky, by *Jupiter*, yonder she is. Now if I can get her Consent I'll marry her for the Cole, and 'twill be Pleasure to see the other rave. But I must be very expeditious in my Performance, or I may be blown: For that Rascal, *Bite*, is a Villain, and, perhaps, may offer my Cloaths to Sale.

Enter Standforth.

Stan. Now, shall I have a good Opportunity to upbraid him for his Villainy.

Sp. Madam, your most obedient Servant; I was just doing myself the Honour to wait on you.

Stan. See me no more, Monster, unless to hear of your own Perfidiousness.

Sp. Madam, I must acknowledge you have just room for Complaint: But considering my late Misfortune, you cannot so justly condemn me as you seem in Anger now to do.

Stan.

Stan. Oh Sir, you have a pretty Way of extorting Pardon; but 'twon't do with me.

Sp. Upon my Soul, Madam, you wrong me much, to suppose me false in the smallest Article.

Stan. Oh Sir, go flatter Mrs. *Wantcock*; she, no doubt, will give Ear to your fine Speeches.

Sp. Madam, if I have seen Mrs. *Wantcock* since she was with you, fling me off for ever. — Nay, if she gives you, any Uneasiness I'll go with you, and to her Face declare — I have no other Design, but in every Thing to act agreeable to my Promise.

Stan. Ay, Sir, this is your old Way of Canting; if I should forgive you now, you'd the next Opportunity deceive me again; so that 'tis best we should part.

Sp. What did my charming *Standforth* say? not talk of parting, I hope, unless you'll kill me quite; nay, if you command me, I'll this Moment dye to give you Ease.

Stan. Rise, Sir, and this once I'll try you.

Sp. What a joyful Word was that! Oh Madam, you have, from the Brink of Death, rescued your devoted Slave. [Kneeling,

Stan. Well, this Evening you'll be at my House, and if you really design what you say — consult.

Sp. Agreeable to your Desire I'll attend, Madam; but don't let us part till I have some hopes you will not delay my Happiness.

Stan. The Part, Sir, lies on yourself, as being the best Judge of your own Inclinations.

Sp. Then, Madam, I would give you this Moment a Proof of my Sincerity.

Stan. I must away, so fail not at four o'Clock, if you ever intend to see me again.

[Exit Standforth.

40 *The KENTISH ELECTION.*

Sp. Sola. Four o'Clock's the Time I should meet *Wantcock*. Well, but if I get *Standforth*, as I think I am in a pretty way enough, 'twill be a hundred Pounds in my way, and 'tis worth while to break one's Word for that; well come, I can't quite sink now——if that merciless Dog would forbear exposing me I should have room to play a little: But I must not trust, there it would require the Wisdom of a Mayor to manage this Matter right.

*If I am blown, I must most surely fall;
If I succeed, my Mistress pays for all.*



A C T IV.

S C E N E. *Sir John Truelove's House.*

Sir John alone.

SUCH promising Hopes of Success fires one's Ambition, which must be indulg'd against all the Opposition *Sir William* can make. My Lord's Interest being so very great, 'tis impossible they can do more than give us further Trouble. What would I give to be sure of that charming Creature's Affections?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. *Sir John*, here's two Men want to speak with you: They say, if you are in the Country: they'll find you.

[*Ex. Servant.*

Sir

Sir J. Admit them.

Enter two Electors.

Well, Gentlemen, what's your Pleasure with me?

1 *Free.* Sir, if your Name be Sir *John True-love*, we'll soon tell our Business.

Sir *John.* I am the Man, then.

2 *Free.* Why, Sir *John*, we come from Sir *Nathaniel Free-souls*, with a List of Neames that my Neighbour took from the Exciseman that was to have a Guinea a-piece for Voting for the other Side.

Sir J. Ay! How many might there be?

1 *Free.* A Thousand.— Here, Sir, here's the List, and our Business is from Sir *Nathaniel Free-soul*, to desire you will shew it my Lord *Heart-free*.

Sir J. What! did the Exciseman drop it?

1 *Free.* No, Sir.

Sir J. How came you by it, then?

1. *Free.* By it, Sir? Why, I was inform'd by Neighbour *Broomstick*, that he had such a Thing; so I went civilly and asked him for it: But truly, he said, he would not show it me. So, said I, you had better. No, truly, he would not with good Words, till I at last gave him a Whur and a Trip, so Sir --

Flinging up 2d Free]
and catch'd 'em out of his Pocket.— So I carried 'em to Sir *Nath.* and he sent us both away to you.

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha. But, pray, by your Whur and Trip, don't you think the Man will take the Law of you?

1 *Free.* No, Sir, 'twas Right; he should have had better Manners.

2 *Free.*

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2 *Free.* Sir, I never saw one in my Life that was not a quarrellsome sort of a Fellow.

Sir J. Well, Gentlemen, I thank you for your Trouble; but walk in to Dinner in the next Room, while I prepare a Letter for Sir N. *Freefoul.*

[*Ex. two Free-holders.*]

What is't these Fellows have brought me? Let's see—[*reads.*] A List of doubtful Votes, that 'tis necessary to Bribe, if our Interest should not be strong enough for the opposite Party — hum. 'Tis common to take such Methods; but how Men can be so fond of Honour, to purchase it at so dear a Rate, I know not; however, the Day being so near, they'll not have the Liberty to put all in Execution: Ambition is a Passion grounded in Nature, and we must be more industrious than common if we lull it to sleep. [Exit.]

Enter Wantcock.

Want. This Man will make me mad, to promise to come, and now to put me off to Six o' Clock: Well, however, I'll pay Mrs. *Standforth* a Visit in the mean Time. [Exit.]

S C E N E *Mrs. Standforth's House.*

Spruce and Standforth drinking Tea.

Sp. Upon my Word you have some of the finest Tea I ever tasted in my Life.

Stand. I'm glad you like it, Sir. So I was telling you, Sir, Mrs. *Wantcock* insulted me in a very barbarous manner, call'd me Names, and said, Truly Mr. *Spruce* had a better Fancy than to take up with such a Dowdy as I was. *Sp.*

Sp. Most unaccountable ! I never mention'd the Word Love to her in my Life, Madam.

Stand. No, Sir ! however, I was even with her, for I jeer'd her to the Purpose.

Sp. Serv'd her right, Madam ; she's very impertinent when she sets on't.

Enter Maid with the Tea-kettle.

Maid. Here's Mrs. Wantcock at the Door.

Stand. Get you out of sight Mr. Spruce.

Sp. With all my Heart Madam.

[Exit to a Closet. Curse on this Accident.]

Enter Wantcock.

Want. Madam, your Servant.

Stand. Your humble Servant, Madam.

Want. I came, Madam, thinking to find Mr. Spruce here, to deliver a Message to him.

Stand. Oh Madam, you have all his Company.

Want. No Madam, I submit to my Betters, upon my Word.

Stand. Then Madam, to be plain, I expect him presently.

Want. Will you give me leave to stay ? Now I shall catch her. *[Aside.]*

Stand. Madam, the Ceremony's of your own making.

Want. Well, I hope I may almost wish you Joy, Madam.

Stand. No, Madam.

Want. Upon my Life, Madam, the Talk runs so.

Stand. You know better,

Want.

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Want. Indeed I don't.—I'll vex her. [*Aside.*

Stand. Nay, I'm sure you'd not be so easy then.

Want. Why not?

Stand. Because, Madam, I know you love Mr. Spruce.

Want. But if he don't love me, 'tis of no signification.

Stand. Ay, but you say he does.

Want. I say so! no, dear Madam, I never said so—but on the contrary, must acknowledge Mrs. Standforth to have superior Charms, that engage that Gentleman's Affections—ha, ha, ha.

Stand. Ha, ha, ha, you seem very pleasant, Madam.

Want. It cannot but be agreeable News, to hear me disclaim my Title to Mr. Spruce.

Stand. I have not heard you, Madam; you only come now you think you have the Advantage of me, to tell it, which is very ungenerous.

Want. Since that's the Story, Madam, prepare to hear a Tale, that will infallibly give you Ease.

Stand. Good News is always welcome.

Want. Then briefly this: To-morrow morning is the time that joins me to Mr. Spruce for Life; so, if you have any mind to be at the Wedding, don't say you know not the time,

Stand. Mr. Spruce is a Villain, if he marries you.

Want. He's a Villain if he don't to-morrow.

Stand. Nay, I'll ask him that.

[*Goes to the Closet and opens the Door, Mr. Spruce comes forth.*

Want. Oh—

[*Faints.*
Stand.

The KENTISH ELECTION. 45

Stand. Now I believe thee a Villain: Here *Mary*,
some Water. [*They raise her. She comes*

again, Oh thou deceitful Rogue!

Want. Mr. Spruce! and hast thou deceiv'd
me, even in this? ha. [*Sighs.*

Sp. Aside. Damn it, such an unfortunate Dog
never liv'd.

Stand. What Punishment is equal to thy
Crimes?

Want. Not Death can atone.

Stand. Death, Madam! let's dispatch the Dog
by Inches.

Sp. on his Knees.] Be merciful, Ladies, and
hear me.

Stand. Hear you? what again? No, take that.
[*Slaps his Face.*

Want. And that, Villain.

Both. And that, and that.

[*Both push and cuff him out.*

Sp. Hear me, Ladies. [*Exit.*

Stand. Now could I tear myself to pieces, to
think I have given Ear to his villainous Stories.
Curse the Fellow——oh——I could——

Want. And I could kill him. Oh, my poor
Heart. [*Cries.*

Stand. To promise both at once! 'tis you have
ruin'd me, Madam.

Want. Ay, lay the Blame on me, Madam, ha.

Stand. Well, Madam, since Fate has so order'd
it that we both should love, and both be deceiv'd,
let us mourn our joint Loss together, and dedicate
our Days to come, to lonely Comforts; let's
make some unhappy Shepperdesses our Patronesses,
and never think more of Man, false, damn'd,
deceitful Man.

Want.
t.

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Want. 'Twill be noble to punish the Sex, and make 'em wretched; to shew 'em by their own Follies, they have most justly incurr'd our Displeasure; and as they know no Happiness that does not center in the Embraces of Women, make 'em in Tears repent, tho' never regain the Heaven they have lost.

Stand. Ay, Madam, let's keep that Resolution, and never bring back the once sweet, but deadly thoughts of what has past; for those Moments were spent like our first Origin, under the false pretences of being happy, but to our Cost have we been miserably deceiv'd.

Want. Why did you mention the past Moment that brought the false Creature to my Mind, with a milder Aspect than I will ever again entertain? my Resolution melts into a compassionate concern for his Villainy.

Stand. Perhaps you'll forgive him.

Want. No, if I do, may Heaven never pardon me.

Stand. Bravely said; then thus Hand in Hand, let's vow never to entertain him more.

Want. I do by all that's good.

Stand. And let's appear to morrow at the Election, as gay and unconcerned, as tho' we were unknown to him.

Want. I will.

Stand. Then how will the Villain sneak away!

Want. I'll warrant he'll hang himself.

Stand. 'Tis no matter if he does.

Want. No matter, indeed, cursed Dog.

Stand. To-morrow at ten be ready, I'll call on you.

Want.

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Want. I will, and shall be happy in having all past Differences reconcil'd.

Stand. We are Friends, never more to quarrel for a Man, 'tis a foolish Strife.

Want. 'Tis indeed, Adieu. [*Exit.* *Want.*

Stand. Your Servant, Madam——Adieu, Mr. *Spruce*, thy Fopperies shall never shake my Resolution again, but from henceforth I will despise your Sex. [*Exit.*

SCENE *changes to the Town.*

Spruce walking as Home-ward.

Sp. Never was there such an unfortunate Dog before, nor, I believe, ever two such Women! how they used me! and to what a miserable Circumstance am I driven, is terrible to think on. Sure no Man was ever reduc'd as I am. No Money, no Cloaths, nor no Mistress: I believe if I was to see that sharpening Dog, I should cut his Throat if I had not my Cloaths again: Tomorrow's the Election, and I shall make a fine Figure there. Damn it, I'll hang myself; oh——

Enter Bite.

Bite. Out of Civility to you, Sir, I came to ask if you thought of redeeming your Cloaths, for I must dispose of 'em this Afternoon.

Sp. And art thou such a Dog to expose me?

Bite. You expose yourself. *Sp.* 'Tis false.

Bite. No ill Language, Sir.

Sp. Can my Tongue offend you, Villain—ha?

[*Catches hold of him.*

Bite.

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Bite. Take Care what you say, Sir.

Sp. Dare you prate? come, Sir, before the Mayor. [*Pulls him.*

Bite. What, Sir, are you an Officer?

[*They struggle.*

Sp. Ay, for you ye Dog, ye common Sharper.

Bite. See what a Man gets by Civility. Sure Some-body will come to my Assistance, and not let me be tore to Death by a Madman. What! ho!

Sp. I'll ho ye.

[*Shaking him.*

Bite. Thieves, Murther, ho.

Sp. Give me my Cloaths then.

Bite. Let me go, and you shall have 'em.

Sp. This Moment, Dog.

Bite. Let me go then.

[*Gets loose. Bite at Distance.*

Sp. Now.

Bite. What.

Sp. Give me my Cloaths.

Bite. You have assaulted me in the Street, for which I shall bring an Action.

Sp. Give me my Cloaths, or, by Gad.

[*Threatens.*

Bite. Ay, Sir, for five Pounds, [*Drawing farther.* if you please.

Sp. Sir, I'll have 'em.

[*Going after him.*

Bite. No, Sir, not if you [*Still drawing farther.* was the Mayor.

[*Runs off.*

[*A little Way after him, returns.*

Sp. Never the near; well, such Villains are insufferable. Curse upon my Follies, for ever being concern'd with him; for that Thing alone has work'd my Ruin.

Exeunt.

SCENE

SCENE *changes, to Spiggot's House.*

Enter several Gentlemen, &c.

1 *Gent.* Landlord.

Spig. Coming, Sir.

1 *Gent.* Can you entertain us To-Night?

Sp. Yes, Sir, yes. What would you please to drink? I have all Sorts.

2 *Gent.* Shew us a Room, and take Care of our Horses.

Spig. Yes, Sir.

3 *Gent.* Is Sir *John Trulove* gone to my Lord's?

Spig. Yes, Sir, he went by two Hours ago in his Coach and Six, with his Men all in New Cloaths.

1 *Gent.* A fine Appearance. You are full of Company Landlord.

Spig. Yes, Sir, very full.—Coming, Sir,—What will ye drink Gentlemen?

2 *Gent.* Is the Wine good?

Spig. Yes, Sir, upon this Occasion, very good.

3 *Gent.* Bring a Bottle.

Spig. Yes, Sir; [*Exit and returns.*] Will you please to eat any thing *Gent.*—I hope you are for my Lord and Sir *John*.

1 *Gent.* Bring us Wine.

Spig. Yes, Sir.

[*Exit.*

All. ha, ha, ha.

2 *Gent.* An odd Fellow this.

1 *Gent.* Two or three Questions at once.

Enter Spiggot.

Spig. Gentlemen, here's a Bottle of Wine, better never was drunk. [*Fills.*

2 Gent. To my Lord's Health.

Drink round, sit down.

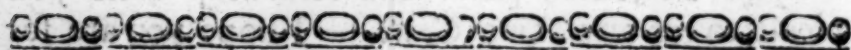
[*Exit Spig.*

SCENE *shuts.* *Enter Spiggot.*

Spig. E'cod, I shall get an Estate if I can keep from drinking. I wish there was an Election every Month; but if there was my beastly Wife, would still keep her Tongue upon the pad; nothing can stop that Mouth of her's but Clay, and did not care how soon 'twas full, because I then could live pleasant, drink what I pleas'd, and have No-body to say, why dost thou so?

Sings *Oh then I would drink*
And gather the Chink,
With Bumpers I'd cast away Sorrow
Because my dear Wife
That's the Cause of my Strife
Would not see the Election To-morrow.

[*Exit.*



ACT V.

SCENE *Lord Heartfree's House.*

Enter Lord Heartfree and Sir John Trulove, dress'd.

L. H. **T**HIS Day will very likely decide the Controversy; but 'tis too early to attend it yet, therefore at your Request I will employ

ploy my spare Time in Business of another nature ; to wit, that as you Sir *John* have inform'd me you have paid my Daughter frequent Visits, with Offers of your Love, which, no doubt, proceeds from a sincere Desire to become her Husband, and honourably to pass your Life to come with her. I think you need not long want my Consent ; for to be plain, Sir *John*, I have long wish'd my Daughter would make Choice of a Man whose good Qualities I should approve of.

Sir *John*, my Endeavours, my Lord, shall always be striving to deserve your Approbation.

L. H. Doubt not your Sincerity ; nay, must own I think you share more Merit than 'tis common to find in Men of your Fortune ; yet, 'tis very probable, Sir *John*, I may not be acquainted with all your Qualifications ; for to know a Man truly is the hardest Part of Philosophy : But since in every Thing you hitherto acted, you have appear'd with a just and fair Character, I must confess, if you have not my Daughter you have my Heart.

Sir *J.* My Ambition, my Lord, aims at nothing above becoming, with your Consent, your Daughter's humble Servant ; but how far I have succeeded——

L. H. That you have succeeded, I presume you well know, at least have no Reason to doubt ; therefore, Sir *John*, if my Consent can make you happy, you shall not want that.

Sir *J.* Your Lordship's Goodness to me in all, but more particularly in this Matter, shews I have in some measure, deserv'd your Favours.

L. H. Sir *John*, out of a sincere and hearty Desire to see my Child happily dispos'd of, and after

I had founded her Inclinations to know if she would accept of any Lover, I cautiously mention'd you to her. She seem'd neither way extream, but with a kind Indifference left that Choice to me, assuring me the Man whom I propos'd should succeed in her Affections; I declin'd the Choice, but ask'd what she thought of the Character the World gave you; she was delighted to repeat the known Merits of a Man, that I found she from her Heart respected: This was just after you first mention'd your Intentions to me. I took another Opportunity, and among many other Things, ask'd her, if from an indifferent Choice of all the Men she knew you was as agreeable as any. She frankly answer'd you was; this, Sir, in short, was the Purpourt of our Discourse; to which I presume, you're not a Stranger, having, as she has since inform'd me, farther declar'd your Designs, which she has on Condition of my Approbation accepted.

Sir John. Nothing can make me so happy as that fair Creature, I do assure your Lordship: my whole Study shall be to merit her Love, in doing which, I shall not fail of yours; which will make my Happiness complete. One more Favour I will entreat your Goodness to grant, and that is, not long to delay my Happiness.

L. H. That's not in my Power either to hasten or delay, but when my Daughter shall consent—the sooner you are join'd, the sooner will my Care be ended; therefore if this Day make her yours, 'tis to me the same. But here she is, and I'll speak in your behalf.

Sir J. I thank your Lordship.

Enter Lady Maria:

L. H. How does my Dear.

L. M. I thank your Lordship. Sir *John*, your Servant.

Sir *J.* Lady, your most Obedient.

L. H. My Dear, Sir *John* has just been asking my Leave to become your Husband; the Proposal I know is agreeable to your Inclination, therefore as soon as you think convenient, let me see you join'd.

L. M. When your Lordship pleases.

Sir *J.* Then my Lord, since you are to determine the matter, be pleased, as we shall have time to spare, to elect me your Son: This very Day the Country will elect us their Members.

L. H. A proper time. Come my dear Girl, what say you?

L. M. I am always obedient to your Commands, my Lord.

L. H. Why then, Sir *John*, I here present you a Hand, and with it a Heart that I may truly account the dearest to me of any thing in Nature: Kind Heaven indulge you in all good things; may you become to each other the choicest of Blessings, and after a happy Issue to succeed you in what Fortune shall bestow, may you live to a comfortable old Age together, and Hand in Hand be Blest both here, and in a more happy State.

L. M. My dearest Father, you have made me the most happy Woman on Earth.

Sir *J.* My Lord, your paternal Care for your only Child is such, that I cannot express—But
from

from thence will learn how much I ought to love my dearest Creature.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. My Lord, there is a whole Parlour full of Gentlemen waiting for your Honours.

L. H. Say we'll wait on 'em immediately.

[Exit Servant.]

Come my Children, as 'tis a Day of Joy, so let's ever keep it in Remembrance. The World believes you will soon be married, and now if they know it, will doubly rejoice.

[Exit all.]

SCENE *the out-part of Spiggot's House, with a Prospect of the Town at a distance.*

Enter a large Body of Gentlemen, Clergy, Freeholders, &c. with Favours: They call and drink Lord Heartfree's, and Sir John Truelove's Healths, and depart. After, enter Hotbrains, Homestroke, Stickfast, and Company waiting at Spiggot's for Lord Heartfree, and Sir John Truelove,—all Cry, Liberty and Property—No Excise.

Hot. My Lord, and Sir John, not come yet.

Home. No, dost not see they ben't?

Stick. To their Healths.

[All drink.]

[At some distance a confused Noise of King and Country, No Excise, &c. Musick, Drums, &c. Another Company, after which, Lord Heartfree, and Sir John Truelove, joined by those waiting at Spiggot's, pass over the Stage as to the

The KENTISH ELECTION. 55

the Place of Election ; more Company comes to Spiggot's, and call for Liquor.

Enter Spiggot drunk, with his Apron in his Hand, Money in it, he shakes it.

Spig. Coming, Coming, Coming, Sir. Gentlemen I am glad to see you upon my Soul, Lord *Heartfree* for ever by Gad hickup, I am as drunk as *David's Sow* ; hickup, therefore you're kindly welcome, pay or not ; hickup, my Wife, oh I had forgot her, you may pay her in the whole if you please ; or hickup, if 'twas not for that Woman, honest *Jack Spiggot* would be a damn'd Rogue ; come, a damn'd Rogue, ha, ha, ha, *Spiggot*. No, I beg pardon as you know of, hickup, I challenge any Man but my Wife, she I don't dare meddle with, I'd rather hickup, be taken in Hand by the first Minister than her, for I doubt, hickup, I shall never recover my Honesty again ; hickup, but you are all welcome, hiho, Lord *Heartfree*, Sir *John Truelove*, and *Excise* for ever.
[*Tumbles off the Stage.*

Com. A strange Fellow, ha, ha, ha.

A Song, a Song. [At a distance, Liberty and Property, King and Country.

1 *Man*, sings. *To Lord Heartfree's success,*
May Sir John have no less,
But in Parliament may they both shine ;
For we hope to be freed
From that ugly breed
That would haunt us when e'er we
For, &c. (do dine

2 *Man*

2 *Man.* Good Blood, come, damn the *Pretender.* [Drinks.

All. Amen.

1 *Man.* Here's more Company, hollow Boys, more Company with Favours.

[*All go off, a confused Noise of No Excise, Liberty and Property, King and Country, &c. After which the Returning Officer declares Lord Heartfree, and Sir John Truelove duly Elected, Company going backward, seeming full of Joy.*

Enter Lord Heartfree, Sir John Truelove, and several Gentlemen.

Sir J. I give your Lordship Joy.

L. H. Doubly the same to you, Sir John.

[*All the Gentlemen wish the Members Joy.*

L. H. Well, my good Friends, since this is a Day of Joy to all, but to us more than all, as being my Daughter's Wedding Day, I have prepar'd Entertainment for those that will honour us with their Company, come, Gentlemen.

1 *Gent.* We'll attend.

[*Exit.*

Enter after in the Company, Spruce with a Favour, to 'em next, enter Spiggot drunk.

Spig. You're welcome, Gentlemen, hiccup.

Sp. Why so melancholy, Landlord.

Spig. Because I want to be, hiccup, a Secretary of State, that I might have my Wife, hiccup, and Daughter hang'd or burnt, hiccup, for Coining, so here's a Bumper to her Confoundation, and Destruction.

Com.

Com. Poor Fellow, ha, ha, ha.

Sp. I will go to my Lord's, there's a Ball, oh if I had my Cloaths.

Enter more Company, Shout and Drink; the Scene shuts 'em in. Enter Wantcock and Standforth.

Want. I saw him at a Distance.

Stand. How did he look ?

Want. Very dejected, I doubt he wont be at the Ball to-night.

Stand. Won't he, we shall be able to expose the Villain.

Want. Let's haste to my Lord's, we shall be betray'd. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to Lord Heartfree's House.*

Company in a large Dining Room, Musick.

L. H. Come, let's have a Dance.

L. M. My Lord, all the Company is not come.

Sir J. My Dear, here's two Ladies just at the Door.

Enter Standforth and Wantcock. Seat themselves to see the Dance. In the midst of the Dance enters Spruce, bowing to the Lady; is seen by Mrs. Wantcock, who faints.

Want. Oh !

1 La. Oh ! Water——— [*All the Company in a*
Oh, she comes to herself. [*Consternation.*]

L. M. Give her Air, she'll revive.—Smell to these Drops.

Stand. Ah, this is Mr. Spruce's Doings : He's a vile Fellow. Poor Creature, she loves him still, for all his Unkindness.

Comp. Mr. *Spruce*, What's it you have done to the Lady?

Sp. Nothing, upon my Soul, Ladies.

St. Thou art a lying Villain; but, for my Part, I'll resign my Share, and leave her to have you all.

Sp. Thank ye, Madam. [Aside.

Want. Well, since it must out, I do confess Mr. *Spruce* has very much abus'd me.

L. H. Oh, Sir, you must do the Lady Justice.

Spr. My Lord, upon my Life she turn'd me out of Doors, and beat me.

L. H. Ha, ha, ha. Poor Gentleman. Ha, ha, ha. But you see she's concern'd for it.

L. Sp. Ay, my Lord, but she beat me.

Sir J. Come, Sir, I find you have deceiv'd both Mrs. *Standforth* and Mrs. *Wantcock*; but, in Pity to Mrs. *Wantcock's* Affliction, for your ill Usage, Mrs. *Standforth* resigns all Pretensions to you; therefore, if I can persuade Mrs. *Wantcock* to forgive you, you shall excuse all past Things.

Sp. I am much obliged to you, upon my Soul, Sir *John*.

Sir J. My Dear, as this is the Day that makes us happy, let us contribute as much as possible to others Good. Do you persuade the Lady to pardon this Beau.

L. M. 'Tis a Pleasure to be doing Good. — Come, Mrs. *Wantcock*, pardon the Gentleman, he'll never commit such a Fault again.

Want. Ay, My Lady, but he deceiv'd Mrs. *Standforth* as well as me.

L. M. But when he's married it will be out of his Power to deceive either, therefore be reveng'd that Way.

Want. My

Want. My dear Lady, if I was sure he'd never follow other Women, at your Request I'd forgive him.

L. M. I'll be bold to say, he never will. Mr. Spruce, come here, and answer for yourself.— This Lady pardons all your past Faults, on your promising before this Company, never more to offend, but at present to ask her Pardon, and continue faithful for the future : This you must do.

Sp. In Obedience to your Ladiship's Commands, I promise never to offend again, but will continue her faithful Servant.

L. M. These Conditions will give to each, much Pleasure. Well, I heartily wish you may both continue happy.

The Company congratulates Mr. Spruce, and Mrs. Wantcock on the Reconciliation. Musick and a Dance ; which ended, Lord Heartfree rises.

L. H. I doubt not but all are happy. As for Sir John and my self, we will, to the utmost of our Powers, endeavour to repay the Obligation we owe to our Friends, by a steady Adherence to every Thing that can contribute to the Welfare of the People we represent.

1. Gent. We well know your Lordship's Goodness.

2 Gent. And are well satisfied of both your good Conduct.

Sir J. I thank you, Gentlemen.

L. M. My Lord, the Supper waits.

L. H. Then let's retire, and conclude this Night like good Subjects, with loyal Healths, and with true Hearts, drink to the Prosperity of Trade, hope

Peace

Peace will flourish, and all Animosities cease; that
every Good our Country wishes may crown all.

*Thus let all good Subjects in Concert join,
And not at peevish Statesmen's Ways repine,
For Publick Good, Security and Peace,
Let us always pray, and never cease
This Rule to learn, which is most wise,
That by Discontent we ourselves Excise,*

F I N I S.



